

**DRAFT SUMMARY OF October 1, 2015 MEETING of the
PEDESTRIAN, BICYCLE, and TRAFFIC SAFETY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Executive Office Building, 9th Floor Conference Room**

Members Present: Darrel Drobnich, Chair; Angel Garcia-Ablanque, MCPS; Drew Morrison (for Roger Berliner), County Council; Aaron Zimmerman MNCPPC (for David Anspacher); Marybeth Cleveland; Leah Walton; George Branyan; Kristy Daphnis; Captain Thomas Didone, MCPD; Ramin Assa; Jeremy Martin, Rockville-Maryland Municipal League; Kristy Daphnis; Al Roshdieh, MCDOT; Wendy Leibowitz; Anyesha Mookherjee, MSHA; Ken Hartman, BCCRSC (for Reemberto Rodriguez); Steve Friedman

Members Absent: Colleen Mitchell; Roger Berliner, County Council; Reemberto Rodriguez, SSRSC; David Anspacher, MNCPPC;

County Staff: Jeff Dunckel, MCDOT; Nadji Kirby, MCDOT; Will Haynes for Kursheed (KB) Bilgrami, MCDOT; Shelley Johnson, MCDOT; Shawn Brennan, MCHHS Aging and Disability Services; Robert Gonzales, MCDOT Sidewalks; Rich Earp, MCDOT Sidewalks; Bruce Mangum; MCDOT Pedestrian Signals; Nancy Greene, MCDGS; Michael Subin, CEO

Guests: Sarah Gotbaum, Women's Aging Alliance; John Wetmore, Perils for Pedestrians and Western Montgomery County Citizens Advisory Board;; Bob Walsh; Jon Morrison, MBPAC; Peggy Dennis WMCCAB; Cindy LaBon, American Council of the Blind;

PBTSAC Committee Business:

Chair Darrel Drobnich called the meeting to order at 7:04 pm, calling for introductions. The minutes from the August meeting were approved. Jeff Dunckel provided an update on membership vacancies. In the second round of recruitment 10 applications were received, including a couple from bicycle advocates. There are now a total of 16 applicants. As soon as applications are received from the BCC office, the interviews will be scheduled. The selection committee will include Jeff Dunckel, Darrel Drobnich, Kristy Daphnis, and Ramin Assa. Applications are no longer being taken.

Wendy Leibowitz has agreed to draft this year's annual report and will be developing an outline.

The CountyStat review will take place on October 7th at 3:30pm. (The review was rescheduled to November 10 at 2:00) The address is 255 Rockville Pike, Suite L-10, Rockville, MD 20850. It's open to the public if anyone wants to attend.

Review of Current Status/Federal Guidelines for ADA Program – Goals and Objectives (Nancy Greene)

The U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) selected 50 jurisdictions around the country to review ADA compliance. After the initial review it was decided this would become an ongoing program. Since the initial review, the DOJ has completed over 200 project civic access settlement agreements. Montgomery County's civic access settlement agreement began in 2006. The DOJ surveyed over 100 County facilities (primary buildings) and provided their findings to the County. The findings included a review of County policy and procedure, communication with law enforcement and the hearing, visual, and speech disabled, and a review of the County curb cut and sidewalk plan.

The requirements in the settlement agreement are standard for every jurisdiction. When the DOJ reviewed the County curb cut and sidewalk program, they only looked at what is strictly required by the ADA - the width of the sidewalk, cross slopes, curb cuts, and accessible crosswalks. In 2013, the US Access Board developed additional standards/guidelines for public-rights-of-way. Once they are adopted by DOJ, they

will become standard. (US Access Board website: <http://www.access-board.gov/guidelines-and-standards/streets-sidewalks/public-rights-of-way>) Montgomery County has voluntarily complied with the recommendations in the draft public rights-of-way.

FHWA is the enforcing agency for any complaints for the accessibility of the public -rights-of-way. Their expectation is that any new construction and alternations must be in compliance with those draft guidelines. The County has followed those standards. In 2003 there was a major case concerning sidewalk accessibility.

The DOJ asked for County for a list of every street that had been built, paved, or repaved since 1992 in order to determine compliance. In order to supply these records, the County would have to spend an inordinate amount of money to recreate the records. The County told the DOJ that the initial transition plan was completed in 1992 and the County implemented all recommendations by 2001. All new construction projects were built using the new ADA standards. The County settlement agreement, signed in 2011, can be seen here: http://www.ada.gov/montgomery_co_pca/montgomery_co_sa.htm.

The original 1992 transition plan is what the County implemented. Subsequent programs have their own plans (i.e. Accessible Pedestrian Signals Plan). When the new guidelines are issued by DOJ, a new transition plan will be developed. There are no provisions or requirements for utilities to render existing infrastructure as ADA compliant (fire hydrants, telephone poles, etc.)

ACTION: Jeff Dunckel to send out links to the DOJ agreement and the Access Board guidelines now being evaluated. Also, County should monitor Federal rulemaking: OMB seeks local jurisdiction input into their rule making process for Federal regulation (confer with Kristy Daphnis who works for OMB.)

Review of County Sidewalk Program and ADA Compliance (Rick Earp)

The budget for construction of sidewalks is \$1.9 million. The County doesn't look for missing sidewalks but responds to requests. The County currently has 140 outstanding requests for sidewalks. The requests are evaluated based on public use and public need. Requests from schools, home owners associations, and County Council are given priority. The sidewalk program can be very controversial because many homeowners do not want sidewalks put in their yards and will often fight construction. New sidewalks built in Montgomery County require a public hearing. If a sidewalk is determined to have no controversy it may be pushed through by using the public hearing waiver. Only three or four sidewalks have gone through this waiver process. The County typically installs four to five miles of sidewalk per fiscal year.

The ADA compliance program is a \$10.8 million improvement program with a yearly budget of \$1.5 million per year. \$1.2 million is spent on the repair of existing infrastructure and \$300,000 is spent on labor/operating expenses. The sidewalk program works closely with Division of Highway Services. When a street is built, the County is obligated through the DOJ settlement agreement to make sure all the sidewalks and curb cuts are ADA compliant. When the County builds a sidewalk, it will devote resources to identifying compliance issues in the area. Now that many of the curb cuts are in place it's getting harder to find issues. The sidewalk program developed an online form where residents can submit issues. (<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/dot-dte/sidewalk/sidewalkInstallation.html>) Residents can expect a response within six months of their request. More complicated sidewalk requests can take longer.

Review of Traffic Signals Conversion to Extended Crossing Times and APS (Bruce Magnum)

The County has a program to equip all traffic signals with Accessible Pedestrian Signals (APS). All new traffic signals built in the last few years are equipped for APS. Any reconstructed traffic signals have been equipped with APS. And the third way is through the County's retrofit program where priority signals are upgraded through an evaluation process. All other County traffic signals have gone through a

prioritization process for APS installation. The County is using a tool created by the National Cooperative Highway Research Program that is used by agencies throughout the country to determine this prioritization. The County is one third of the way through this process. The County controls 283 traffic signals and 98 are currently outfitted with APS. The state deadline to get all signals statewide retrofitted for APS is 2016. Magnum answered questions on specific aspects of implementing the upgrade to APS.

Presentation: Bicycle and Pedestrian Priority Areas (BiPPAs) (Aruna Miller)

In 2000, MDOT adopted a policy to incorporate BiPPA into the regional planning. A BiPPA is a geographic area where enhancement of bike and pedestrian access is a priority. In 2011, the first BiPPA was recognized by MSHA in White Flint. The Montgomery County Master Plan has recognized 28 BiPPAs, many of them focused in current or future urban areas. In FY15, the County authorized \$370,000 to evaluate the first five BiPPAs (Glenmont, Grosvenor, Silver Spring CBD, Veirs Mill/Randolph, and Wheaton CBD). The County went to the community, regional service centers, and advisory groups and asked what projects they wanted to improve pedestrian and bicycle access and safety. The County also looked at the area master plans and at what other agencies in the area were doing. From this evaluation the County was able to compile a list of BiPPA projects that were affordable and relatively easy to build. Moving into FY16, the County has \$875,000 to implement recommended improvements. MCDOT decided to target one area for this year's expenditures: Silver Spring. The total budget is \$5 million over 5 years. Silver Spring was chosen as the first BiPPA to make improvements such as signage, markings, curb ramps, sidewalk improvements, crosswalks, bike lanes, and installing bike racks. The County will be developing a new website in November that shows where the BiPPAs are, what improvements are being made, and will allow the public to make comments. Current BiPPA project website:

<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/dot-dte/projects/BicycleandPedestrianPriorityAreas/index.html>

A new web site modeled on the MNCPPC Bike Plan web site that features an interactive function (crowd sourcing) to obtain public input will be posted by MCDOT by the end of November

ACTION: Add this link to the PBTSAC web site as well. When the interactive web site is created in November, add this link to the PBTSAC web site as well.

Presentation: September Seniors/Disabled Walk-About Event (Marybeth Cleveland/Shawn Brennan)

On September 10th, 2015, the PBTSAC held a Seniors/Disabled Walk-About in Gaithersburg. Elected officials and County and State officials joined seniors and disabled pedestrians to walk (and roll) a mile of Frederick Avenue, between Chestnut Street and Perry Parkway. Together, the group examined the state of pedestrian walkways, sidewalks, and signals. Afterwards, everyone met at the Bohrer Park Activity Center to discuss their findings and develop a plan of action to make Montgomery County more walkable and accessible for all its residents. Please see the meeting summary and PowerPoint presentation for all the issues and concerns discussed.

Action: Shawn, Marybeth, and Darrel will develop a list of recommendations that came out of this event and other work in this area to bring back to the Committee before sharing with the County Executive and County Council. Follow up with Councilman Katz who asked for specific recommendations regarding problems areas on Frederick Avenue.

Discussion: DOT Items (Al Roshdieh)

MCDOT is working with OMB on the capital budget. Al Roshdieh's priority this year is pedestrian and cyclist mobility. The capital budget will be released January 15 and the operating budget will be released on March 15. The State asked \$50 million for the Purple Line and the County was able to reduce it to \$40 million. The County will not provide this money until FY21 or FY22.

Pedestrian Safety Enforcement Funding (Captain Tom Didone)

The FY16 \$80,000 budget for enforcement was excluded from the County's savings plan - - but MCPD are having trouble finding it. Last year the police averaged 18 details a month. This year's plan has the police doing 40 details a month. That is 1,920 hours of police enforcement dedicated to pedestrian safety this year.

School Bus Cameras (Captain Tom Didone)

Through the school bus safety camera program, over 1,025 tickets have been issued and are on a pace to exceed last year's totals. The current bus camera system costs MCPD \$125,000 and it has to issue 2,000 tickets for the program to break even. A vendor with a different pricing model would like to outfit all 1,200 school buses with new cameras. MCPD supports the school board in issuing a sole source contract to this vendor. This camera system will save MCPS \$800,000 a year. There would be three or four cameras on the inside of the bus, a camera on the exterior of the bus, GPS system, thumb keypad that can track when kids get on and off on the bus, and it would allow the school board to remotely view into the bus and see what is going on inside. The vendor would keep all the revenue to cover maintenance and equipment costs. If approved, it would protect every school bus in the fleet. The current bus camera contract with Xerox expires in June 2016.

Speed and Red Light Cameras (Captain Tom Didone)

Speed cameras and red light cameras are still going strong and continue to be effective in improving safety in the County. Montgomery County is the only agency running a speed camera program that has received a positive evaluation – the Insurance Institute evaluated the program. The County has proven that cameras do save lives. Captain Didone recently studied the crash data from 2003 – 2008, and 2008 – 2014. The County used to average 50 motor-vehicle fatalities and 15 pedestrian fatalities a year. Since speed cameras have been installed, those numbers have gone to an average of 33 motor-vehicle fatalities and 10 pedestrian fatalities a year. The County will not be able to expand the program for another two years.

Discussion: County Council Items (Drew Morrison)

Budget hearings will begin once the Council receives the capital and operating budget. It's very important that they receive comments from the public. Please send comments to Jeff Dunckel and Darrel Drobnich on the Motion Tracking Report items that involve budget requests

Update on Bicycle Master Plan (Aaron Zimmerman)

Kick off meetings for the Bicycle Master Plan began around the County in September. On October 6th, a meeting will take place at Walter Johnson High School. They had great reception in the more urban areas and people really liked the interactive map where you can provide comments on the different problems. (<http://www.montgomeryplanning.org/gis/interactive/bikeways.shtm>) The draft plan will be submitted to the board in late 2016 and approved by County Council in late 2017.

ACTION: Jeff Dunckel to get Casey Anderson's Twitter and Facebook links and post to the website for posting comments and issues on the Bicycle Master Plan, and other bike ped issues.

Update on Education/Outreach (Nadji Kirby and Jeff Dunckel)

Walk to School Day is October 7th and the host school for this year's event is Bells Mill Elementary. Safe Routes to School has a great new website:

<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/DOT-PedSafety/SRTS/home.html>

Nadji will provide League of America training on Monday. Participants will include four crossing guards and two police officers. Training will take place once in the fall and once in the spring.

The Montgomery County Pedestrian Safety Education Program is targeting Bethesda this October. Shelley Johnson will be leading several street teams and events to promote staying visible at night and crossing the street safely.

StreetSmart will hold a kick off on October 27th. The Tired Faces campaign will include advertisements on Montgomery County Ride On buses, social media, and television. The budget for this program has been increased to \$700,000 (previously it was \$400,000).

Topics for Next Meeting:

- Review of County 311 system
- Update on Implementation of Bill 3-15: Sidewalk Closures During Construction
- Update on Implementation of Snow Removal Plan (sidewalk mapping)
- Update on Outreach to Office of Community Partnership Regarding Ethnic Advisory Committees

The meeting adjourned at 9:35 pm.